

MINUTES
WEST VALLEY LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
September 29, 2020

Chairman Steve Alejandro called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Committee members present were: Steve Alejandro, Paul McKenzie, Barbara Long, Monty Long, Bruce Colburn. A quorum of the advisory committee was present. Meeting was held in the 4-H building at the Flathead County Fairgrounds. County Planner Erin Appert was in attendance. No representatives of the applicant nor any members of the public attended.

The minutes from the June 23, 2020 meeting were reviewed and approved. Motion by Bruce C. second by Monty, unanimous vote in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

A brief discussion of the progress on review and update of the West Valley plan was had. The Chairman reminded the committee to review the Bigfork and Ashley Lake plans for ideas of what a revision could look like. His assessment is that the zoning restrictions in WV are pretty solid, there needs to be significant update of statistics and community characteristics as they have changed significantly since original drafting.

The asphalt plant project has sparked some renewed interest in update of the plan by WV residents. The chairman has been fielding phone calls and discussions. From those, he generated a short list of issues and concerns that should be considered in the revision process, including:

- Open Space Requirements
- Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) concerns
 - Water source
 - Building material standards
 - Firewise treatments
- Opportunity for a convenience store – gas station.
- Development restrictions around the FWP wildlife viewing area.

A discussion was had around the proliferation of travel trailers and other temporary structures that are popping up across the WV area. Multiple travel trailers being added to single family residential lots. New properties with semi-permanent trailer installs. Concerns over sanitation, water, electrical safety and fire were discussed. It was generally agreed it is not the role of this committee to serve as an enforcement arm, but can provide direction to concerned individuals on how to work with County enforcement when issues arise. Paul M. pointed out that the current zoning does address auxiliary residences and hardship residences that may apply in some of the situations. To date, the committee has seen no requests under these provisions of the zoning.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

No general public comment was received.

NEW BUSINESS:

The board reviewed one project, a request by Ben and Krista Van Helden with technical assistance from Environmental Health Consulting for preliminary plat approval of the Amended Subdivision Plat of Lot 10, Homes on a Thousand Hills. The project would create 4 residential lots on approximately 20 acres.

All lots would be served by individual wells and septic systems. Access to lots would be from the existing Shepherd Trail road. The property is located in Sec 17 T29N R22W P.M.M. Flathead County.

County Planner Appert presented the County Staff Report FPP-20-16. She verified that the project did comply with 5 ac density standards for West Valley zoning district. She highlighted the need to update the MDT approach permit for Shepherd Trail based on change of land use and density. No agency comments of substance were received. To date, there has been no comment from West Valley Fire, although a letter of support would be required prior to final plat approval. County recommends approval of the preliminary plats based on the terms and conditions contained in the staff report.

Committee members asked for clarification on the letter from WVFD. Nothing has been received yet, but a letter is a condition of approval for the plat.

Committee members discussed how wells and septic can have sufficient separation given the proposed lot layout. Planner Appert provided a preliminary layout of septic and well locations that would be considered and approved by DEQ and County Sanitarian. The layout showed very little room for variance in location of any infrastructure or residences which was a significant concern of the committee. It was agreed to highlight this concern in our recommendation to the Planning Board.

Committee members questioned the enforceability of conditions 21 and 22 dealing with WUI designation, building material limitations and firewise requirements. Planner Appert acknowledged that once final plat is granted, it is difficult for the County to enforce these types of conditions and requirements. The committee appreciated the effort and hoped new owners would recognize the conditions and act appropriately. It was suggested that similar to Condition 5 requiring a RUA or CC&R document to address road maintenance, that inclusion of WUI issues in a similar manner may provide a more enforceable situation. The Chairman pointed out a situation elsewhere where an insurance company did not pay for a loss when the insured did not abide by WUI conditions included in their plat.

Chairman Alejandro opened the meeting for public comment:

- *There was no public comment.*

Board deliberation on the issue ensued. Focus was on the concern over sanitation and well separation.

Bruce C. made a motion, second by Monty Long to adopt Staff Report FPP-20-16 as findings of fact including adoption of all Conditions of Approval included in the staff report and recommend approval of preliminary plat request for subdivision of lot 10 of Homes on a Thousand Hills. The recommendation would include a request for close consideration of the sanitation and water design for the project. Motion passed unopposed.

The board discussed next steps. Secretary McKenzie will draft meeting minutes and a letter to Flathead County Planning Board with the recommendation for approval of the project. Minutes and recommendations will be forwarded to Planning Office and Planning Board as soon as possible.

Monty L made a motion to adjourn, second by Bruce C. Passed unopposed at 7:15pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Paul R. McKenzie